DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 257 290 EC 172 718

AUTHOR Wetherell, Nancy
TITLE The ACT Program for Academically and Creatively Talented Students.
PUB DATE [83]
NOTE 25p.; The document was developed at Wayne Central High School, Ontario Center, NY.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Academically Gifted; *Acceleration (Education); *Creativity; *Enrichment; *Gifted; *Program Development; Secondary Education; Student Characteristics; Talent

ABSTRACT

The report describes the history and progress of the ACT Program for Academically and Creatively Talented Students at the secondary level in Ontario Center, New York. Background information includes timelines and distinctions between honors and gifted programing. A section on identification presents the definition of gifted and talented, specifies learning and motivational characteristics, and provides sample student and parent inventories. The ACT program scope is explained to include enrichment, acceleration, support, and productivity activities. Additional program aspects described include job functions of mentors; the ACT program philosophy, goals, and model (covering enrichment experiences, small group experiences, and individual or group projects); and program scheduling, resources, and evaluation. (CL)

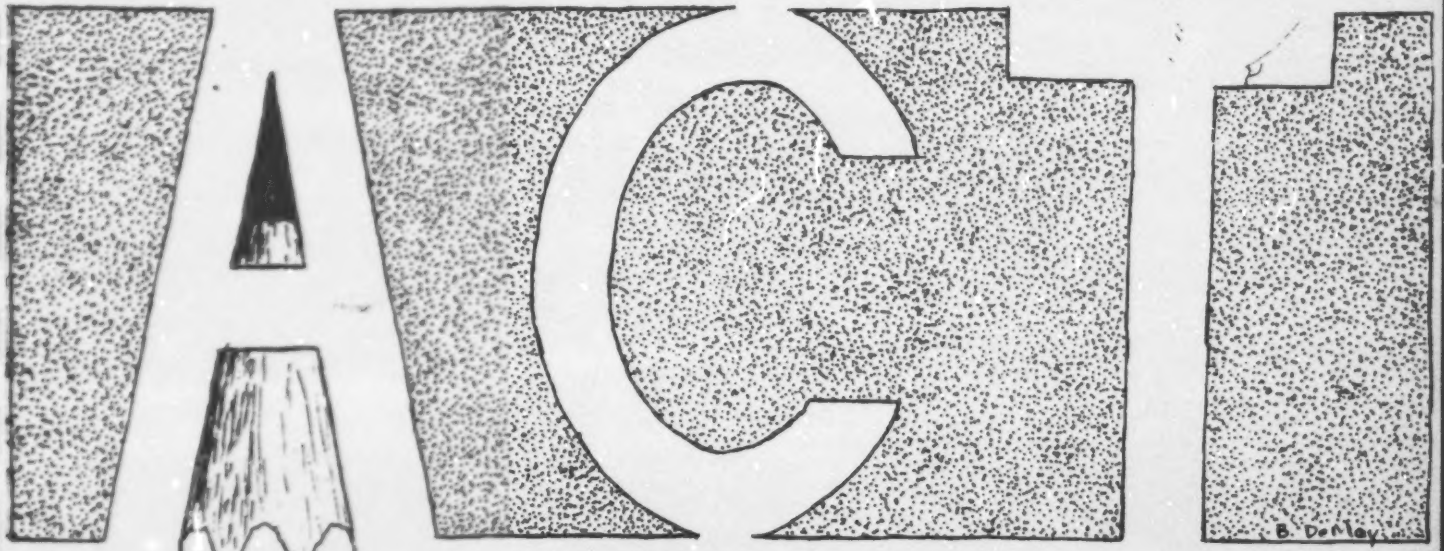
****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED257290

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Nancy Wetherell
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

THE ACT PROGRAM



for
Academically and
Creatively Talented
Students

Wayne Central High School
Ontario Center, NY 14520
(315) 524-2811

EC172718

THE

ACT

PROGRAM

FOR ACADEMICALLY AND CREATIVELY TALENTED STUDENTS

Wayne Central High School
Ontario Center, NY 14520
(315) 524-2811

EC 172 718

Wayne Central School

Superintendent - Dr. Rodney Spring

Principal - Dr. John Cooper

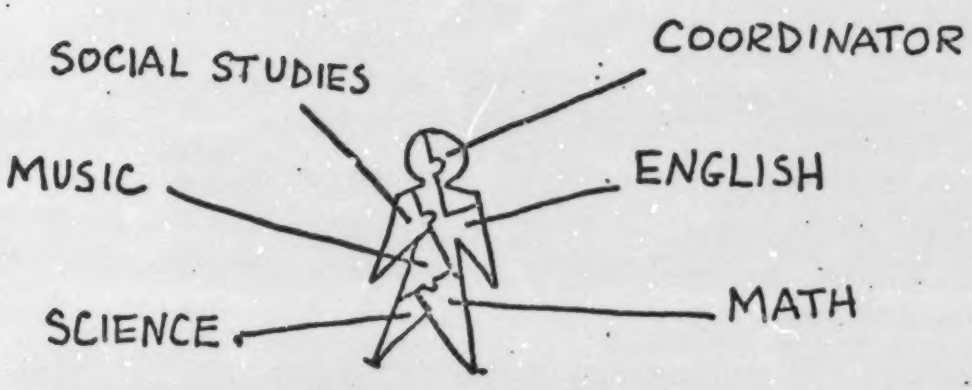
GIFTED PROGRAM STAFF, 1982-83:

Coordinator -- Nancy Wetherell

Mentors -- Joyce Davis - English
Gail Heimberger - Social Studies
Joan Imhoff - Science
Gerald McClure - Music
Marcia Standera - Mathematics

COMMITTEE ON THE GIFTED

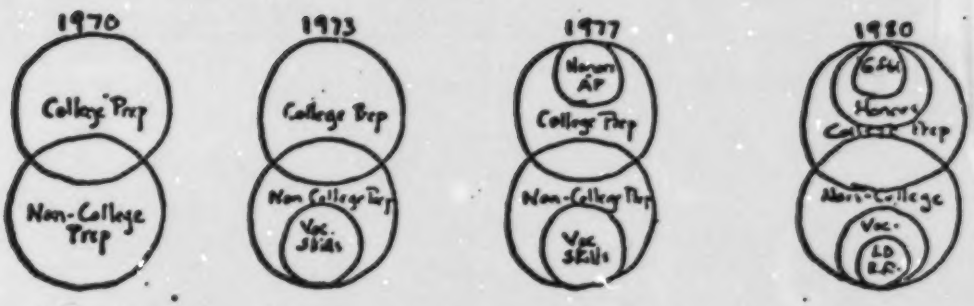
John Cooper, principal
Virginia Crowder, guidance
Joyce Davis, English/mentor
Gail Heimberger, social studies/mentor
Joan Imhoff, science/mentor
Ralph LaVacca, psychologist
Gerald McClure, music/mentor
John Contino, art
Marcia Standera, math/mentor
Judson Stuart, math
Nancy Wetherell, English/ program coordinator/-chairman



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PHILOSOPHY

Wayne Central School District supports the philosophy that public education should meet the diverse needs of all students. Implementing a gifted program and upgrading honors course offerings at the high school level will continue the progress the district has made during the last decade toward meeting these needs.



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Background

TIMELINE	PERSONNEL	TASK
Spring, 1980	Committee on the Gifted (COG) nine members	Committee formed by principal -- volunteers from staff
Summer, 1980 two day workshop	six committee members, two gifted students	Needs assessment Goal-setting
1980-81 school year -- weekly meetings	COG	Program design: Accelerated courses Mentor approach Staffing concept Identification process Scheduling plan
Spring, 1981	principal, coordinator, department chairmen	Selection of mentors from four academic areas
	coordinator, COG	Identification of 40 students, grades 10-12
Summer, 1981	coordinator, four mentors, two consultants	Specific program design: Activities Materials Scheduling
1981-82 school year	program staff	Program implementation
Summer, 1982	program staff (one new mentor)	Program evaluation and revision
1982-83 school year	program staff	Second year of program Revisions implemented

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

	Honors	Gifted
THE GOAL:	To accelerate a student's progress within a subject area to a level beyond his grade, which may, as with Advanced Placement courses, reach college level proficiency	To give students a chance to cross over subject area lines to explore real problems as primary researchers, and to create real products which impact real audiences
THE STUDENT:	An HONORS STUDENT has ACADEMIC ABILITY EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN A SUBJECT AREA HIGH TASK COMMITMENT (Top 10-12% in each subject area)	A GIFTED STUDENT has SUPERIOR ACADEMIC ABILITY EVIDENCE OF ACHIEVEMENT IN ONE OR MORE SUBJECTS SELF-MOTIVATION IN INTEREST AREAS OFTEN, CREATIVITY (Top 5% overall)
THE CRITERIA:	Otis Lennon IQ Stanford Achievement in subject Teacher recommendations Student/parent election through guidance department	Otis Lennon IQ Stanford Achievement - Total Battery Teacher, Parent, and Self nominations Student interview, Parent approval
THE PROGRAM:	At present, our honors courses include the following: English 10 and 11 Social Studies 10 and 11 College level Psychology (Nazareth College of Rochester) Advanced Placement -- English Literature American History Physics Biology Calculus	The ACT Program consists of six teachers with reduced teaching loads. These teachers serve both as mentors for individual students in the program and as planners/facilitators of group experiences for students. Guidance functions of teachers include career guidance, record-keeping, release time management, scheduling, and affective support.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IDENTIFICATION

Wayne Central School defines the gifted and talented students as the following:

1. GENERAL INTELLECTUAL ABILITY: These students, with an IQ of 125 or more, are alert, have keen powers of observation, show a passionate desire to learn, ask endless questions, and have wide interests. They usually have high verbal ability and often show independent judgement. They usually get consistently high marks.

2. SPECIFIC ACADEMIC APTITUDE: These students of above average intelligence exhibit unusual aptitudes in one or more areas. They have ambition and willingness to work long and hard in their areas of ability. These students, for example, may show superior ability in math or creative writing, but lack interest in other areas.

3. CREATIVE THINKING ABILITY: These students do not necessarily have a high intellect. Creativity can be the outgrowth of good mental health or self-actualization. It involves the ability to combine certain known elements to produce something new which may have some kind of social value. This could be a product, a work of art, a theory, an idea. These students have a sensitivity to problems, fluency of ideas and association, originality, and flexibility among other people.

4. VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS ABILITY: Some students have the creative ability plus the intellect to produce original ideas, conceptions, and work. They can compose original musical compositions or create new artistic products. Some students may be outstanding performers. They have the technical skill, the dedication, and the creative sensitivity for interpretation.

5. PSYCHOMOTOR ABILITY: These students are able to express creativity through movement activities. Fine motor skills and high intellect can produce a surgeon or sculptor. These charactertistics must be identified very early to have time for the intensive training necessary to achieve best results.

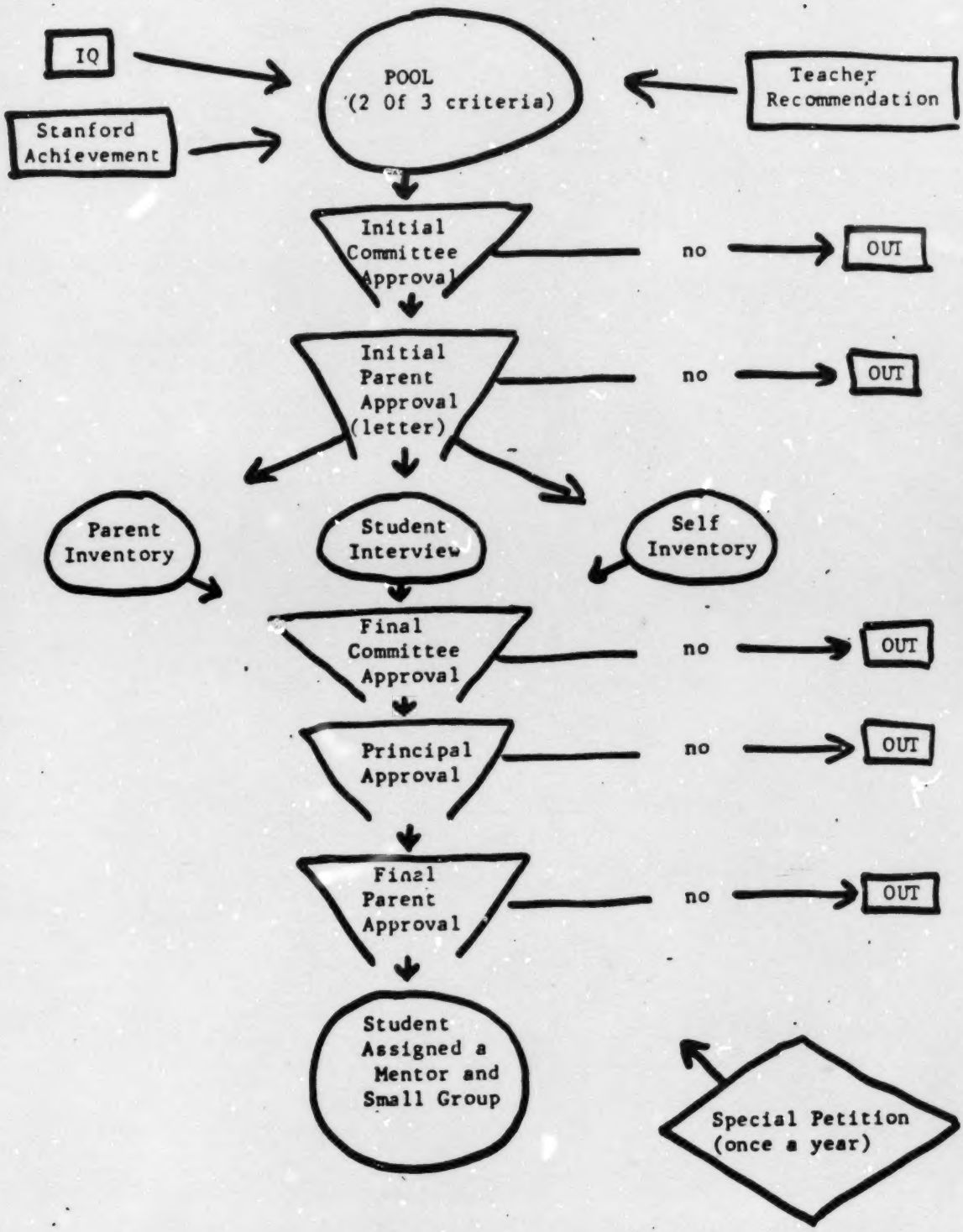
6. LEADERSHIP ABILITY: These students can assume responsibility for directing and organizing groups of their peers to reach desired goals. While exceptionally high intelligence is not necessary in these students, they do possess a combination of psychosocial traits which make them especially outstanding as leaders.

Some students will fit into more than one of these categories. These descriptions serve primarily as a basis for identification.

Some students, because their giftedness has not been nurtured, may be distruptive, and/or underachieving in the classroom.

9 BEST COPY AVAILABLE

IDENTIFICATION FLOW CHART



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS					
1. Is able to use and understand language (advanced vocabulary) fluently.					
2. Has knowledge of a wide range of topics.					
3. Has quick mastery and recall of factual information.					
4. Asks more questions and often inquires into cause and effect relationships.					
5. Shows insights; sees more or gets more out of a film, story, or other learning experience.					
6. Is an independent reader and reads a great deal.					
7. Enjoys problem solving. (puzzles, games, tricky questions)					
8. Shows longer attention span.					
9. Can transfer learning from one situation to another.					
CREATIVITY CHARACTERISTICS					
1. Shows imagination					
2. Shows accomplishment or interest in art, music, dramatics or physical coordination activities.					
3. Has a keen sense of humor.					
4. Generates a large number of ideas or solutions to problems.					
5. Is sensitive to beauty.					
6. Is nonconforming, individualistic.					
7. Criticizes constructively; is unwilling to accept authoritarian pronouncements without critical examination.					
COLUMN TOTALS					

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

	(5)	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
MOTIVATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS					
1. Becomes absorbed and truly involved in certain topics or problems.					
2. Is persistent and may look for unique ways of completing tasks.					
3. Enjoys learning; is self-motivated after initial instruction; willing to spend time beyond the usual assignment.					
4. Has mature intrests in the world around him.					
5. Is often self-assertive, sometimes aggressive or stubborn in his beliefs.					
6. Tends to be organized (ideas, materials, situations).					
7. Is self-critical and strives for perfection.					
8. Shows a desire to excel.					
9. Concerned with right and wrong, often evaluates and praises judgment on events, people and things.					
LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS					
1. Is more at ease in sharing ideas and effort with the class.					
2. Can handle responsibility					
3. Is self-confident with age-peers and is usually well understood by them.					
4. Is able to adapt to change.					
5. Usually involved in directing an activity.					
6. Shows developing understanding in how to relate to teachers and classmates.					
COLUMN TOTAL					
SCORE					

ACT PARENT INVENTORY

NAME _____ DATE _____
student

SCHOOL _____ GRADE _____

Check the following items as best describes your child as you see him:

	Little	Some	Great Deal
1. Has more mature interests than others his age			
2. Sticks to a project once started			
3. Has lots of ideas to share			
4. Has many different ways of solving problems			
5. Is aware of problems others often do not see			
6. Uses unique ways of solving problems			
7. Is imaginative			
8. Others call him/her to initiate activities			
9. Is able to plan and organize activities			
10. Often finds and corrects own mistakes			
11. Others seem to enjoy his/her company			
12. Has ideas that are unique			
13. Has a wide range of interests			
14. Gets peers to do what he/she wants			
15. Likes to play organized games and is good at them			
16. Is able and willing to work with others			
17. Sets high standards for self			
18. Chooses difficult problems over simple ones			
19. Is able to laugh at himself			
20. Likes to have his/her ideas known			

_____
person filling out questionnaire

_____
relationship to student

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACT STUDENT SELF INVENTORY

NAME _____ DATE _____

SCHOOL _____ GRADE _____

Please show whether you agree or disagree with each statement by marking one of the spaces:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I am a good student.				
2. I enjoy working with other people.				
3. Other people recognize that I am an intelligent person.				
4. I enjoy working with mechanical or scientific things.				
5. I enjoy abstract or mathematical problems.				
6. I am one who likes to work independently on special projects.				
7. I enjoy debating or discussing ideas.				
8. I enjoy "losing myself" in a good book or in imagination.				
9. I have a good sense of humor.				
10. My work is quite often original.				
11. I am able to come up with a large number of ideas or solutions to problems.				
12. I am able to take charge of planning a project.				
13. I like to study subjects that are challenging or even difficult.				
14. I often use music, art or drama to express my feelings.				
15. I feel strongly about things and often express my feelings even if they differ from others.				

Here are six areas of talent. Rank yourself as follows: (1) first talent area (2) second talent area, etc.

_____ General intellectual ability

_____ Creative thinking

_____ Visual or performing arts

_____ Specific academic aptitude (in one subject, such as math)

_____ Leadership ability

_____ Psychomotor ability (mechanical or athletic skills)

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Interview questions (Tell student to keep interview questions confidential and why)

1. Describe your hobbies and special interests. Describe any special experiences you have had because of your interests. Any special training in your interest area?

2. (Choose one)
   A. What are your favorite subjects? Why?
   B. What is your favorite type of person? Why?
   C. What are your favorite books, movies, television shows? Why?

3. (Choose one)
   A. If you had half a day of free time, how would you like to spend it? Be specific.
   B. If money were no problem, what career would you choose? Why?
   C. If you were given one million dollars, what would you do with it?
   D. If you had time during a school day to work on any project of your choice, what kind of project would it be?

4. (Choose one) You have one minute to name all the things you can think of
   A. that are larger when they are new than when they are old
   B. that improve with age

5. How do you feel about the possibility of being in a gifted program? What do you think a program like this could do for you? Would you have time for this program? Do you feel you could miss certain classes without lowering your average? What could you offer the program?

Interviewer's comments and/or student responses

_____

_____

_____

Student Name _____ Interviewer _____

Date _____

RATING SCALE

	1	2	3	4	5	6 (highest)
1. Communicates, easily, clearly						
2. Experiences or accomplishments related to interest areas						
3. Has original ideas						
4. Student interest level for participation in program						
5. Student ability to make time for the program activities						
6. Interviewer recommendation for program						

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Wayne Central High School ACT Program

Student's Petition Form

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Please fill out the following information as completely as possible. A follow-up interview will be held with you concerning your interests and reasons for petitioning before a final decision is reached.

1. What, specifically, do you hope to gain by being part of the ACT Program?

2. What skills, attitudes, experiences, talents can you give to the program?

3. List any outstanding achievements or unusual experiences of which you feel the committee should be aware in considering you for this program:

_____ _____

Student Signature Date

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Wayne Central High School ACT Program

Sponsor's Petition Form

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Sponsor's Name _____ Relationship to student _____

Please fill out the following information as completely as possible. A follow-up interview will be held with you concerning this student before a final decision is reached.

1. Why do you feel this student should be included in the ACT Program?

2. What do you see as his/her greatest strengths as a person?

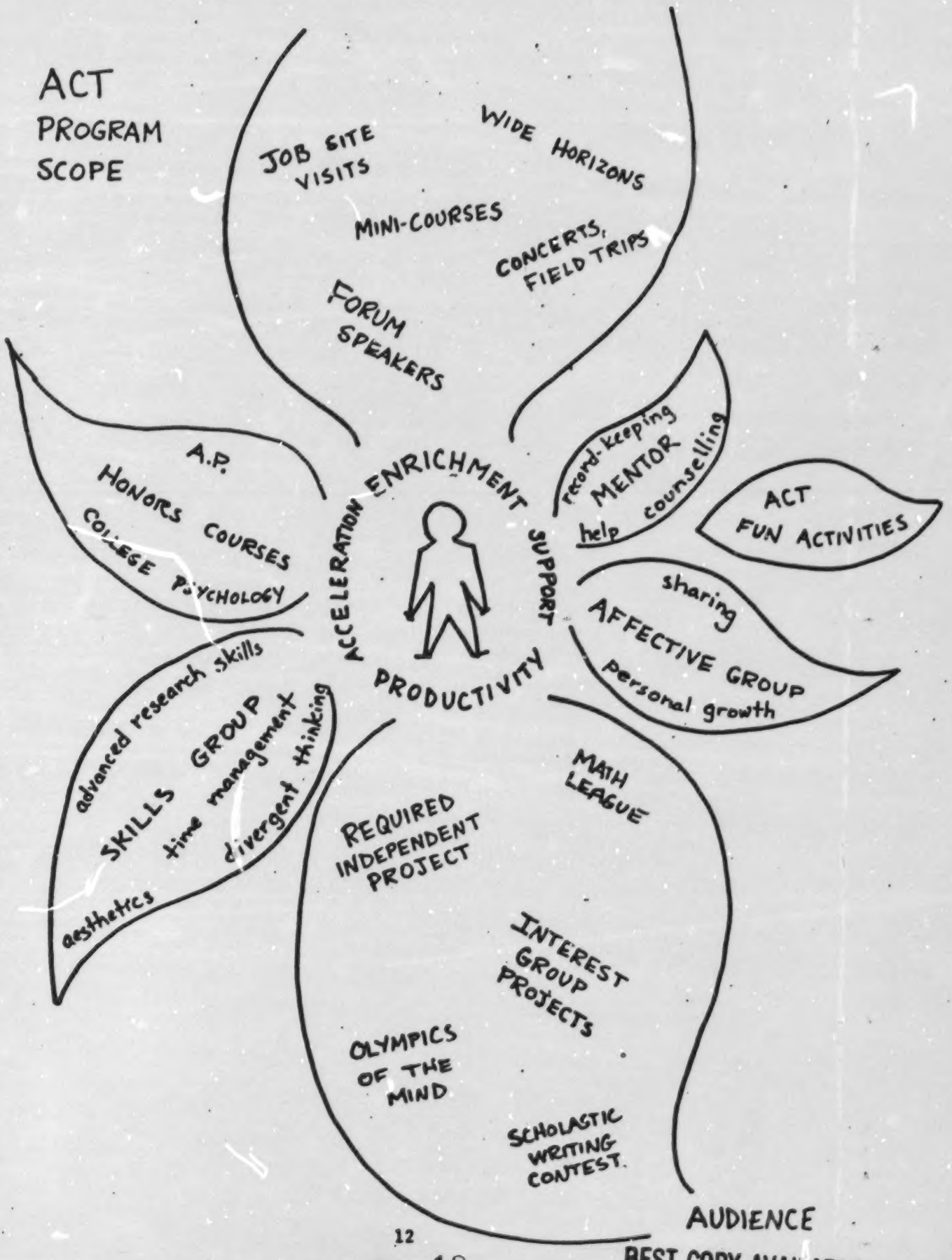
3. Do you know of any behaviors which might hinder his success in this type of program? If so, explain.

4. Is there any other pertinent information about this student of which the committee should be aware? If so, explain.

_____
Sponsor's Signature

_____
Date

BEST COPY AVAILABLE



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Wayne Central School
Personnel - ACT

GIFTED PROGRAM STAFF, 1982-83:

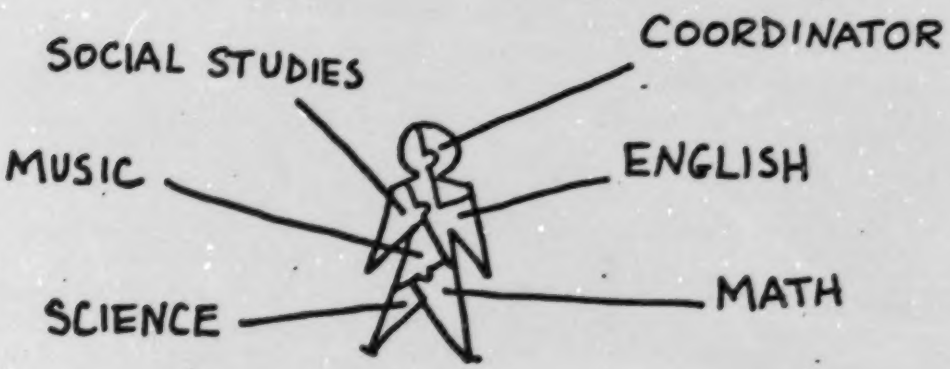
Coordinator -- Nancy Wetherell

Mentors -- Joyce Davis - English
Gail Heimberger - Social Studies
Joan Imhoff - Science
Gerald McClure - Music
Marcia Standera - Mathematics

Principal -- Dr. John Cooper

COMMITTEE ON THE GIFTED

John Cooper, principal
Virginia Crowder, guidance
Joyce Davis, English/mentor
Gail Heimberger, social studies/mentor
Joan Imhoff, science/mentor
Ralph LaVacca, psychologist
Gerald McClure, music/mentor
John Contino, art
Marcia Standera, math/mentor
Judson Stuart, math
Nancy Wetherell, English/ program coordinator/-chairman



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

MENTORS: JOB DESCRIPTIONS

I. EACH MENTOR will be assigned a number of students not to exceed ten. For each student, the mentor will do the following:

1. serve as advocate and contact
2. help plan the student's schedule (with guidance)
3. assist the student in planning individual projects to investigate
4. arrange for release time from classes for project work
5. if necessary, arrange for the student to receive aid from a resource person, either in or out of school
6. help the student to evaluate his individual project and write an anecdotal report of it for his permanent file
7. do career guidance (with guidance dept.)

II. The GROUP OF MENTORS will meet regularly to do the following:

1. assess needs of students in the program
2. plan and direct group activities for the students
3. coordinate a schedule of speakers, resource people, off-campus experiences, and summer opportunities for students
4. maintain an ongoing evaluation of the program
5. publicize the program with parents, faculty, community
6. approve list of identified students; review special petitions for entry into the program

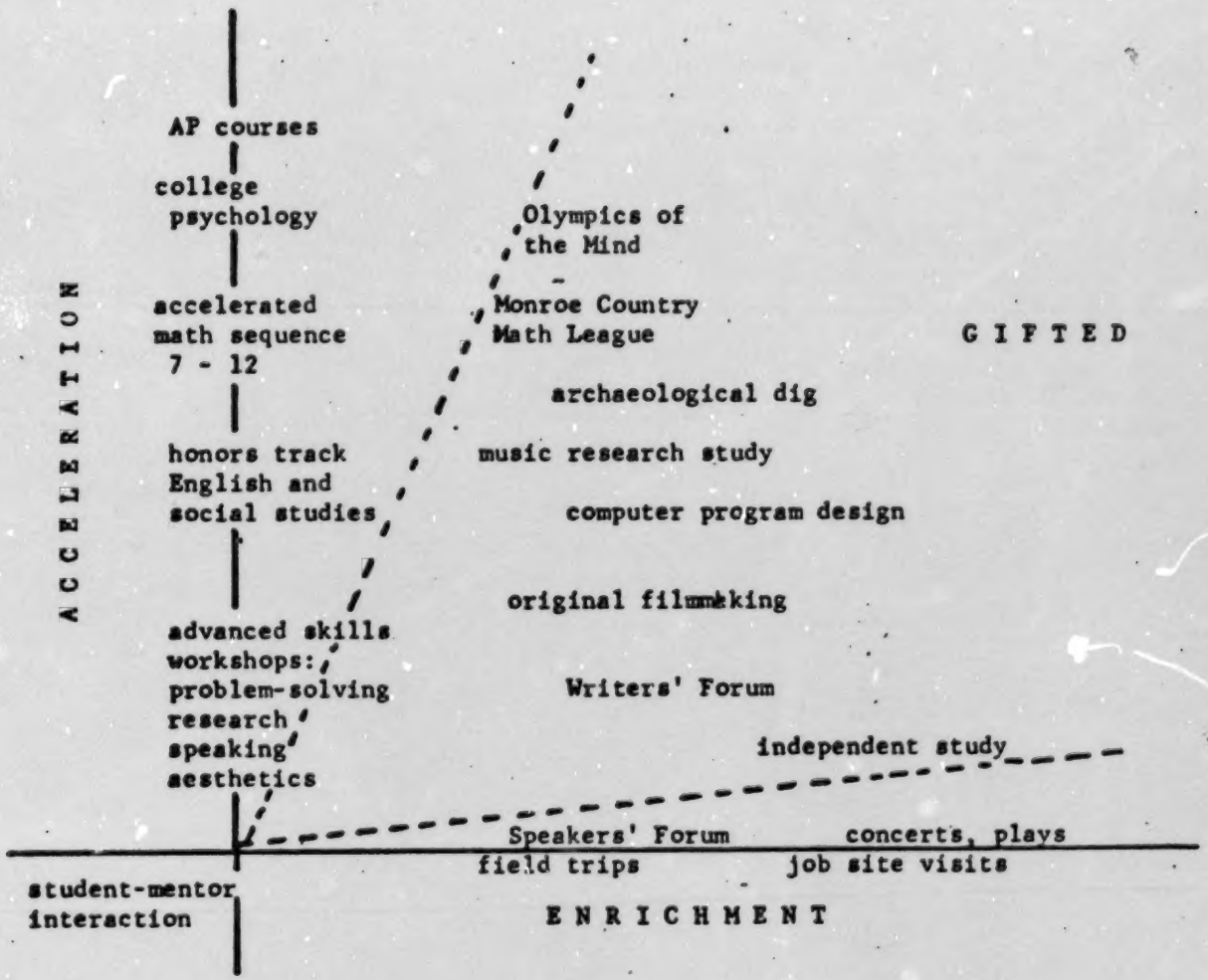
III. The COORDINATOR of the gifted program, besides being a mentor, will have the following duties:

1. chair the mentor group
2. be responsible for the identification process at the high school
3. serve as a contact person for all opportunities for gifted students
4. administer the gifted program: circulate materials, draw up budgets
5. be overall coordinator and advocate for gifted education at the high school
6. serve on the mentor selection committee and district gifted committee
7. develop inservice courses and workshops for staff and mentors

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACT program, 1981 - 1983
Wayne Central High School

ACT



BEST COPY AVAILABLE

PHILOSOPHY

The ACT program is conceived on the belief that gifted students, because of their unique abilities, creativity, and high task commitment, need opportunities which are significantly different from those available through regular classroom instruction.

With the aid of teacher-mentors, community resource people, and local college staff members, students have the chance to become independent learners by defining real problems, solving them, and using their results to create products of high enough quality to be appreciated by wider audiences than just themselves or their teachers.

GOALS

1. To identify gifted students, grades 10 - 12, using multiple criteria.

2. For identified gifted students, to respond to their unique differences in interests and abilities by providing a program different from usual classroom instruction.

3. To gain wide support from students, staff, and the public by including personnel from various departments, by utilizing the expertise of community mentors, and by opening certain ACT events to the wider student population.

4. To emphasize human over financial resources in implementing the program.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

ACT PROGRAM: TRIAD MODEL

I. ENRICHMENT EXPERIENCES:

Objectives:
1. Students are exposed to new ideas with the intent to stimulate interest in in-depth exploration.
2. Mentors will gain direction in planning program activities.
3. Students will become familiar with new career areas.

Activities:
1. Speakers Forum
2. Field trips, films
3. Job site visits

II. SMALL GROUP EXPERIENCES:

A. SKILLS GROUPS--

Objectives:
1. Students will develop skills in four areas: problem-solving, research, speaking/listening, and aesthetics.
2. Students will utilize these skills in project work.

Activities:
1. In-school workshops in skill areas
2. Workshops on college campuses or at industries.

B. AFFECTIVE GROUPS--

Objectives:
1. The students will gain affective support from each other and from mentors.
2. Students will have the opportunity to share ideas and feelings about issues of importance to them.

Activities:
1. Students will meet regularly in a small affective group throughout the year.

C. INTEREST GROUPS--

Objectives:
1. Students will cooperatively explore an area of common interest.
2. Students may find and solve real problems in school or community.

III. PROJECTS: INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP

Objectives:
1. Students will think, feel, and act as first-hand inquirers by focusing real problems, solving them creatively, and designing products which impact these solutions on real audiences.

Activity: (sample) One small group researched archaeology and organized a local dig for Indian artifacts.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SCHEDULING

1. Teacher-mentors devote one-fifth of their teaching assignments to working with gifted students.

2. Students are excused from classes to attend certain ACT activities, such as small group meetings, mentor conferences, and job site visits.

3. Other activities are optional, such as Forum speakers and interest groups.

4. Mentors meet to plan about twice a week.

5. Mentors hold conferences with their individual students several times a year, or more as needed.

RESOURCES

In an effort to focus the ACT program on human resources, mentors seek the aid of the following groups:

1. community members: businessmen, homemakers, artisans, hobbyists

2. district staff volunteers with special skills

3. professors from local colleges

Students may have to raise funds to cover special project costs. The district provides to this program a yearly budget to cover costs such as materials, conferences, transportation.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

E V A L U A T I O N

1. Each student in the mentor program will receive one credit per year for participation in the program.

2. Projects will be evaluated jointly by mentors and students. Furthermore, every product will receive some type of wider audience, such as presentation to a parent group or publication.

3. Anecdotal reports on every project, written by mentors and students, will become part of the student's permanent file.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE